DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 383 467 PS 023 364

AUTHOR Kuwahara, Yuri
TITLE The Creation of Social Order in a Sixth-Grade Classroom.
PUB DATE Apr 95
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, April 18-22, 1995).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Case Studies; *Classroom Environment; *Classroom Techniques; Discipline; Educational Attitudes; Elementary School Students; Elementary School Teachers; Grade 6; Intermediate Grades; Limited English Speaking; *Teacher Student Relationship; *Teaching Methods; *Teaching Styles
IDENTIFIERS *Social Order

ABSTRACT

This paper presents a case study of how social order was created through teacher-student interactions in a single sixth-grade classroom, based on videotaped classroom observations, interviews, and student questionnaires. The paper describes the classroom teacher's teaching methods, use of required texts, and use of standardized tests, especially in relation to how these affected the limited English proficient (LEP) Indochinese minority group children in the class. The paper then uses classroom transcripts to show how the teacher was able to distance himself from his role as the teacher, thereby lessening the social distance, both vertically and horizontally, between himself and the students. The paper also examines the teacher's speech styles and topic control in the classroom. The paper notes that the teacher was able to bring his own life experiences to the classroom, showing students how they can overcome personal problems, peer pressure, and economic disadvantages to excel in school and in life. Contains 41 references. (MDM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 383 467

The Creation of Social Order in a Sixth-Grade Classroom

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Yuri Kuwahara

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC).

Yuri Kuwahara

School of Education
Stanford University

(Kuwahara@leland.stanford.edu)

PS 023364

Paper presented at the 1995 AERA Annual Conference, San Francisco

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Introduction

In countries that have established systems of formal education, the institution of schooling is arguably the single public institution with the greatest influence on the transmission and creation of a nation's social order. It is education, with its various forms of symbolic capital that students accrue to varying degrees as they make their way through the system, which plays a major role in later determining the choices available to people in how they will live their lives. Compared with the private institution of the family, which is relatively free of explicit regulation by the larger society, the public institution of traditional schooling is much more standardized and controlled (Hart 1987 [1955]). It is with entry into our schools that children begin to undergo a prolonged socialization process into the larger society, which, if "successful" by mainstream standards, results in the children's acquisition by the culture of the status quo.

The cultural reproduction view of schooling put forth in Marxist structuralist thought (Bowles & Gintis 1977; Bowles 1977; Althusser 1971; Apple 1990 [1979]; Bourdieu & Passeron 1977, 1979; Bourdieu 1977 [1973]) seeks to show the political and economic relations between formal education and mainstream ideology. Reproduction theory describes schools as providing members of social groups with the knowledge, "skills," and values necessary to contribute toward the maintenance of the state's economy and its class-based system of social stratification. Focusing on broad social structures and the hegemonic ideology of the dominant culture, reproduction theorists remove responsibility for school failure from the individual, and place it instead squarely in the lap of mainstream culture.

Reproduction theory fails, however, in two major ways to provide a theoretical and descriptive tool which can explain the creation of social order. First, by focusing solely on broad structural frameworks, it fails to address the inseparable link between socio-economic structures and face-to-face discursive practice. It thus presents a stagnant view of social relations that precludes any and all change, as if power relations were fixed and frozen at the start of history and were merely reproduced again and again throughout all time. Second, reproduction theory relegates "the dominated" to a role as passive objects rather than as collaborating subjects who actively help to create the social order through the interactions in which they participate everyday.

Bourdieu's theory of practice (Bourdieu 1977, 1991) offers a way of seeing how social structures and everyday interactions are inseparably linked. According to his theory, discursive practices, derived from the personal experiences and backgrounds ("arbitrary culture") that individuals come to internalize through socialization (their "habitus") are not merely the products of social structures, but more importantly, they are the very means by which the social structures are produced. Using the economic, cultural, and symbolic capital that they have acquired from their

"habitus," people maintain and create positions for themselves through practice. In the school or classroom, the authority that teachers and administrators possess by virtue of their positions, makes them the arbiters of other forms of symbolic capital, allowing them to legitimize or delegitimize various forms of knowledge, and to create the official interpretations of texts. The values placed on other forms of cultural capital, such as students' written and oral usage of language and ways of interacting, are determined by the distance of those forms from those of the dominant culture. Bourdieu also asserts that because schools are often viewed as relatively autonomous, independent of other social structures, they are mistakenly seen as objective, neutral, "natural" transmitters of the values and "truths" of a culture (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977), which bolsters their authoritative power by rendering them unquestionable.

As Giroux (1983) points out, however, Bourdieu focuses on domination by the status quo, neglecting the issue of resistance by some to "mainstream" ways of life. Many studies have noted that there are conflicting systems of cultural capital at work in heterogeneous societies, and that in some cases, people may opt for the kinds of capital valued by their own cultures and social groups rather than those of the status quo (Eckert 1989; Labov 1982; Ogbu; Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi 1986; Willis 1977).

From a different view, I would argue that Bourdieu's theory seems to presume that people in positions of authority will want to wield their various forms of economic, cultural, and symbolic capital as if they were whips and lances that can supply their users with ever-increasing power and domination over others. This view does not account for the possibility that those in positions of power may just have a sense of morality, and a desire to work toward justice and equity which would tend to preclude, if not the negative use of, then at least the abuse of, their power. It is not every person who is marred by a Machiavellian streak; not every person who would opt for power over solidarity.

A theory of discursive practice that hopes to offer a means of describing the ways in which we shape our relations with one another must consider not only relations of power but also those of solidarity. It is not only through the negotiation of domination and control that social order emerges. Recognition of commonalities leading to a process of identification with others can be just as powerful in shaping social order as is brute force. And just as it cannot be assumed that the exercise of power over others is inherently negative, neither can it be assumed that solidary relations are necessarily positive, or even that power and solidarity are invariably polar opposites. Relations of solidarity can be empowering on the one hand, when interactants in hierarchical relations move toward a common ground of equality, the objective of which is only a theoretical possibility (Habermas 1981). Solidary relations, on the other hand, can also be divisive and oppositional if used in juxtapositions of "us" vs "them." This point is clearly made in Wodak's (1989) work on anti-Semitism. And it is evident around us everyday in the ideological warfare so

often waged between races, classes, and sexes.

What must be realized is that the gross "solidary" categories that holders of various forms of capital impose on us and use to define us, and which we, in turn, use to define ourselves, can never hope to account for the complexities of our "arbitrary cultures" or the multiplicities of our social spaces. To define ourselves in terms of categories is to allow ourselves to be defined in language that comes to us filled "with the intention of others" (Bakhtin 1981: 294). And in doing so, we allow ourselves to be reduced to beings acquired by the given constructs of a culture and the arbitrary artifacts of its language (Williams 1977). I do not mean to champion a bland universalism that would have us all thinking, feeling, and looking alike. The wondrous diversity of ways of living in the world should be celebrated in all of its glory. I would venture to say, however, that without solidary relations that transcend such socially constructed categories as class, ethnicity, and gender, and without a critical awareness of how these categories and social order are created through practice, there is no possibility for a true transformation of the social order.

Objectives of the Study and Methodology

The present study focuses on how social order is created through interaction in the context of a single classroom. To examine how this social order emerges I will attempt to describe classroom practice and the multiple dialogic links between this practice and classroom-external socio-economic factors. In particular, I will explore the ways in which the teacher and students negotiate solidary relations with one another, through analyses of what I very broadly call style, or level of formality of interactions, since it provides an indication of interactants' identities, social distance, and stances toward one another. The aspects of interactions that I will examine include the negotiation of turns, and the maintenance of "discipline" and "order," as well linguistic features such as the use of terms of address, forms of request, humor, and slang. In addition, the kinds of topics that are legitimated and allowed to be expressed in the public discourse of classroom discussions are also viewed in terms of level of formality, or distance from the students' and teacher's personal, private lives and concerns. I will also examine some of the ways in which the teacher puts critical pedagogy into practice.

Linking teacher-student interactions with classroom-external factors, I will also briefly explore a few of the institutional pressures and constraints such as those exerted by big business and educational policies, frameworks, and budgets, that can have an effect on the discursive practices between teachers and students. And of course, there are the multiple layers of social, economic, and political power relations among peoples and their histories, which are continuously forming on community, national, and global scales, fed by and feeding into classroom interactions.

Setting and Design of the Study

The data analyzed in this study are drawn from video and audio recordings made during more than a year of participant-observation in the sixth-grade classroom of one teacher. In addition to these observations I also audio-recorded conversations with the teacher and a number of students about their backgrounds, identities, attitudes toward learning and teaching, etc., and also spoke with some of the students' families, the principal, other teachers, and staff. The students also responded to a questionnaire which focused on their social backgrounds, language usage in various contexts, and their views about schooling and various academic subjects.

Cooltown Year-Round is a public K-6 elementary school located in a low-income area of a large urban center in California. The ethnic make-up of the approximately 1000 students at the school is primarily Chinese and Southeast Asian (60%), as well as Hispanic (21%), and African American (18%). 66% of the students at the school are categorized as "limited English proficient," and 90% receive free/reduced price lunches. Bilingual classes across all grades are held in Cantonese, Vietnamese, and Spanish, and there are also nine Sheltered English classes and one English-only class. As the name implies, the school is in operation throughout the year because of budget constraints, and is comprised of four tracks which segregate students according to language group in grades K-5. The five sixth-grade classes in the school, however, are all on the same track so that the students can be promoted at the same time. These classes include three Sheltered English rooms with concentrations of Cantonese, Spanish, and Vietnamese primary language speakers, and two mixed language Sheltered English groups.

The classroom that I visited was one of the sixth-grade mixed language rooms, comprised of one English- and Spanish-speaking teacher, Mr. Max, and 32 primarily Cambodian, Mien Lao, Cantonese, Vietnamese, and Spanish first language speakers, as well as several African-American children. Of these students about half had been categorized as "limited English proficient," and several had been labeled "discipline problems" by former teachers.

Classroom-External Factors that May Be Ir/relevant to Classroom Practice

Because of school budget constraints, class size limitations, and severe shortages of teachers and aides who are fluent in the languages of underrepresented student populations, the "leftover" Southeast Asian students in this classroom did not have a teacher who was able to speak the majority of their native languages, nor had they had such primary language instruction in the lower grades. The students had thus been forced to sink, swim, or tread water in total immersion English language classrooms since entering school. The National Education Association provides a figure of 175,000 more bilingual teachers needed nationwide than are presently

available (GAO 1994; CCSSO February 1990). And the California Department of Education estimates that California alone has a shortage of 22,000 bilingual teachers (GAO 1994). In the classroom in the present study, although an instructional aide conversant in Cantonese was available, the Cantonese-speaking students in this particular class had relatively little need of extra assistance. No aides fluent in other languages were available, where the need was in some cases great.

Students in the class were categorized as "limited English proficient" through the use of a single English language standardized test, which is the most common means of assessment used nationwide for placement in language assistance programs. Such testing has been found to be a far from subtle instrument for determining language proficiency (Cheung & Solomon 1991; Strang & Carlson 1991; Knapp, Shields, & Turnbull 1992), however, and thus in school reform efforts nationwide there has been a great call for the use of multiple means of assessment in both the students' primary languages and English.

The classroom in the present study is in a school district with a large minority population which has chosen not to adopt state-approved texts due to concerns about cultural diversity and the portrayal of history in California's History-Social Studies framework (Kirst & Yee 1994). Although this policy allows some leeway in the selection of instructional materials, it also poses problems. In California the textbooks, state curricular frameworks, and student assessments are linked together with each other, and coherent from grade to grade. Thus in districts where state-approved texts are not adopted, students may be being assessed in areas to which they have not been exposed. In addition, 70% of state funding for instructional materials must be spent on materials that have been adopted by the state. The translation of this policy in practice meant, in this particular classroom, that the teacher spent a great deal of time collecting and devising his own materials and projects, and had access only to rather dated social studies texts, though there were sufficient numbers of trade books for language arts. In addition, no instructional materials were available in languages other than English and Spanish.

Although Mr. Max used a combination of traditional texts, trade books, and self-designed projects and materials, both he and the principal at the school endorsed the philosophies of Whole Language and Project Read[1], and these were thus the methods that Mr. Max used in his classroom. In traditional classrooms there are often "hidden" constraints placed on teachers and their students, which can have a tremendous influence on practice (Edelsky 1991; Edelsky, Altwerger, & Flores 1991). For instance, teachers often

---

[1] Project Read, developed under the direction of Bob Calfee at Stanford University, is an instructional program whose goal is to enable students to use language effectively for communication and higher order thinking.

have little say in the instructional materials to be used. They are directed by administrators to teach from basal readers whose contents are determined and fixed by companies in what is now a large textbook publishing industry. These "teacher-proof" basal readers, legitimized by education "authorities," provide the teacher with detailed instructions on how the texts are to be used and how much material is to be covered in certain periods of time. Because the readers are geared toward various reading levels, their use also virtually mandates that stratified reading groups be formed.

Teachers also often have no choice about the use of modes of assessment such as norm-referenced standardized tests that "objectively" ensure that some children will fail if others succeed, and which support yet another huge industry, that of educational testing. The result is that teachers who comply with traditional methods are often stripped of their autonomy and professionalism, and have relatively little voice in what gets taught and how the learning gets done. Both teachers and students in traditional school arrangements are thus often rendered objects which are acted upon rather than active subjects engaged in the endeavor of learning.

In contrast to these traditional views of teaching/learning, the approach used in Whole Language and Project Read focuses on developing critical thinking and conceptual organization. In particular, the Whole Language approach, as viewed by some practitioners, is political in nature.

> Whole language eliminates the grouping for reading and the tracking that ensure unequal access to "cultural capital" (i.e., certain texts, vocabulary, knowledge, analyses). It devalues the major language-based devices for stratifying people. It makes teachers the authors (not "deliverers" or "managers") of curriculum. In other words, it helps subvert the school's role in maintaining a stratified society. (Edelsky, Altwerger, and Flores 1991: 54)

The critical pedagogy of Apple (1990), Freire (1970), Giroux (1992) and others, when applied to Whole Language methods, seeks to "demystify social institutions by helping children investigate connections between surface facts and underlying social structures, between lived experience and structural features of class, gender, and race" (Edelsky 1991: 67), issues which Mr. Max and his students explored continuously throughout the year.

For the students in the present study then, even before they have entered the classroom, Mr. Max's endorsement of a critical pedagogical Whole Language approach, the ethnic/racial integration of students in this particular room, as well as the lack of capital in the form of funding for programs, appropriate qualified staff, suitable language assessment procedures, and instructional materials, are shaping the possibilities for classroom interactions. And before the students even set foot in the room,

the categories of "limited English proficient" and "disciplinary problem" have been imposed on them through the use of instruments of sorting out, such as English language tests and teacher evaluations, which stress the students' lack of cultural capital in the dominant culture rather than the wealth of other kinds of capital that the students may have.

In addition, the historical circumstances leading to the presence of minority children in American schools can also potentially have a great effect on student practice in the classroom. Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi (1986) argue, for instance that "involuntary immigrants" such as African-Americans and Mexican-Americans, whose ancestors were forced to become part of American culture through slavery, conquest, or colonization do poorly in school because of their continued exploitation by the dominant culture. Such students come to form collective identities characterized by an oppositional stance toward the dominant group, while stressing the preservation of their own group's social identity.

The Indochinese children in the present study share similar histories. In the wake of the devastation and human suffering that rose to a monumental peak during the ideological power struggles of Southeast Asia in the 1970s, more than 800,000 Indochinese refugees who had fled from the havoc of their homelands to countries of temporary asylum were eventually settled in the United States. It is now estimated that 1.25 million Vietnamese, Cambodian, Lao, Hmong, Mien, and various other ethnic groups have come to be a part of the American multicultural fabric, with hundreds of thousands of Indochinese students now enrolled in the nation's schools, more than one third in California (Wehrly 1990; Rubin 1981).

Statistical surveys have found that various circumstances related to time of arrival, ethnicity, and school subject matter produce differential results in regard to the children's school attainment and acculturation. Refugees who came to the United States after 1978, for instance, which was the case with all of the Indochinese students in this study, have generally been found to be less equipped in material, cultural, and symbolic capital, e.g., education, material resources, job skills, and degree of westernization, than refugees who came in 1975 with the fall of Saigon. They have also had correspondingly higher rates of school failure and poverty (Caplan, Choy, & Whitmore 1991; Strand & Jones 1985), exemplification of Bourdieu's point that economic, social, and symbolic capital are interconvertible.

Among the various refugee groups, Cambodians, Laotians, and ethnic groups with traditionally oral cultures, such as the Hmong and Mien, have tended to fare worse in school than the ethnic Chinese Vietnamese (Caplan, Choy, & Whitmore 1991; Rumbaut & Ima 1988; Strand & Jones 1985; Nicassio 1983). Other findings have indicated that performance in language arts is dramatically lower than in the maths and sciences across all refugee groups, which ultimately limits overall school attainment and employment opportunities for the children (Caplan, Choy, & Whitmore 1991).

The Emergence of Social Order Through Classroom Practice

In actual classroom practice, Mr. Max did not appear to orient his teaching in a negative way to reflect the labels that had been given to his students. He explicitly told them that they were coming into his class with a clean slate.

> All of your teachers have told me things about you. "Look out for this. Beware of this Watch out for this." Or "This person's a real tough kid." Or "This person's a wise guy." I don't listen to that. I'm gonna judge you on what I see in my class; not on what somebody told me.

Some of the students who had been labelled "discipline problems" were no longer problems in Mr. Max's room. What this meant for two such students, whose previous teacher advised Mr. Max to keep lists of the students' behavioral infractions, seemingly focusing on what the child was not doing right, was a jump in attendance from a few days a month to nearly perfect.

In regard to the "limited English proficient" students, Mr. Max did use quite a bit of repetition of both his own and the students' utterances for greater comprehension by all, and also made ample use of visual aids, including manipulatives, charts, graphs, pictures, videos, and TV programs (Krashen 1981). Mr. Max also stressed the relative unimportance of decoding skills, which are often the focus of study for LEP students in Sheltered English classes where low teacher expectations are common (Diaz, Moll, & Mehan 1986), and emphasized instead, higher order conceptual skills.

When one student, Quince, asked during the first week of school if this was a slow class because it was "sheltered," Mr. Max's response stressed the high expectations he had for the kids, which were conveyed to them repeatedly throughout the year.

> T: I had a question over here. Asked if this was one of the slow classes. Let me guarantee you, you guys, by the end of the year, I will put you up against any of the students in the sixth grade in Cooltown.
> S: Against what? Against what?
> T: I would put you up against any class in any sixth grade school in Cooltown /to compete./
> S1: /Even Catholic?/
> T: Even Catholic. If you are going to do anything that has to do with academics--science, math, social studies-
> S2: English.
> T: Reading language arts, I would let you compete against anybody in Cooltown.
> Ss: How about the "uptown" schools.
> S3: Ah, they cheat.
> T: And I would not worry about whether or not you would do well. I know you would do well.
> S4: Do it in sports.

S5: Jeopardy.
T: Because I'm gonna do my best to- when I finish with you, you're gonna be ready for seventh grade. I guarantee it. OK? So if anybody ever asks you, "Are you in a slow class," just say, "Yeah, slow to be in the eighth grade." OK? That's what you tell 'em.
S6: What does that mean? I don't understand, I don't get that.
S7: Hey, you're dumb.
Quince: It means, it means, it means, [waving hand] like we don't know the eighth grade work, but we can pass the seventh.
T: There you go. You are gonna be ready. So when you go to seventh grade next year and that teacher says, "OK, ladies and gentlemen. We're gonna do a little algebra today." You'll say, "Bring on ol' al. [kid laughs] I'm gonna take 'im on head on." OK?

Because teacher-student relations are inherently hierarchical, teachers have relatively great power in arranging the contexts for what, how, and if learning gets done. They are also at least halfway responsible for determining the social distance and quality of that distance, jointly created through interaction, between themselves and their students. One of the keys to Mr. Max's success with nearly all of his students was the way in which he negotiated his identity in relation to those of his students, which thus helped to open the door to the students' access to academic knowledge. In many contexts Mr. Max presented himself to his students in a "role distancing" (Goffman 1961) manner, or distancing of himself from his formal positional role as teacher. He also lessened the social distance, both vertically and horizontally, between himself and the students by identifying with them, especially the "discipline problems," as closely as possible, and by bringing the private sphere into the realm of public discourse.

From the first day of school and throughout the year, Mr. Max brought his own life story into the classroom, which was similar to the life experiences of many of his students. He told the class about how he grew up in the projects down the road, how his father left the family when he was young, and how his mother struggled to make ends meet for her family of six. He spoke about how his mother had been discriminated against because of her Spanish accent and about how, in her desire to shield her children from the same prejudice, she did not allow them to speak Spanish at home, which he deeply regretted. Thus, he urged the students in his class:

> So those of you who speak a language other than English, don't let go of it. You keep speaking Vietnamese. You keep speaking Chinese. You keep speaking Hmong, Mien, Lao, Cambodian. Whatever language you speak at home, keep speaking it. Don't let go of it. Because when you get to be older, that second language is gonna make you a powerful person.

Mr. Max also told the students how he'd been expelled from two schools and sent to juvenile hall by the time he was in sixth grade, how his teachers viewed him as a gangster, and how he finally came to realize that fighting was not the way that he wanted to live his life. He spoke at length with the students about peer pressure, about taking responsibility for their own actions, and about how to avoid getting in fights, which helped to influence one student to get out of a gang.

Mr. Max also told the class of his past experiences in the military, boxing, playing professional baseball, owning a physical therapy business, and teaching martial arts. And he spoke about being a schoolteacher:

> Well anyway, I became a teacher. And I enjoy it. The reason I enjoy it is two reasons. One, I get to work with kids and I l- I LOVE kids. And I like working with 'em because I get to see how they grow. I get to learn from them. I get to learn about your music. I get to learn about the way you dance. I get to learn about your interests. And the second thing is I get to change your lives sometimes.

The students personal lives and concerns were also brought into the classroom throughout the year in various assignments such as autobiographies, self-portraits, essays on why they are special, how they have changed during the year, how they feel about going on to seventh grade, immigrating to the U.S., cultural customs, and so on. There were also many discussions and assignments on stereotypes, race, sex, and class inequities and how such inequities were constructed, with Mr. Max stressing personal responsibility for actions. Within the first twenty minutes or so of the first day of school, for instance, they were talking about the way in which they had self-segregrated themselves by sex and race in their seating patterns, and the need for everyone to learn to get along with each other in one big family, whose members were bound to have some problems, but who would stick together and work things out.

Interactional Styles

The identification that Mr. Max began to establish with his students from the start helped to create contexts which enabled them to devote their time and energy to learning rather than to getting organized to learn (McDermott 1977). Aside from identifying himself with the students through his life story, Mr. Max frequently "raised" the students' status by highlighting their identities as young, intelligent, responsible adolescents rather than as children whose physical movements needed to be controlled. On the first day of school, for instance, Mr. Max explained in a typically humorous manner, with a bit of African-American vernacular English tossed in:

> I do not have a lot of rules. And the reason I don't have a lot of rules is because I think you guys are intelligent enough, I think you guys are old enough to be able to understand some basic rules. For example, if I say, "I don't want you puttin' your hands like this. I don't want you puttin' your head down. I don't want you gettin' up out of your seat. I don't want you gettin' water. I don't want you goin' to the bathroom without raisin' your hand." No. You gotta go to the bathroom, go. One at a time, but go. When you're at home do you raise your hand, "Mama, I gotta go to the bathroom?" [kids laugh] You're gonna be walkin' around like this all day [crosses legs] 'cause your mama not gonna answer you.

Except for during whole-class activities students self-regulated their movements. And for recess they were free to either go out or stay inside and continue to work or play, the latter of which many often did.

Another way in which relatively informal contexts were created in the classroom was through the use of informal turn-taking styles. In more informal interactions, in which turns are determined by "current speaker selects next" or "self-selection," there is relatively little control of one interlocutor over another. In more formal styles, on the other hand, in which there is greater constraint over "the parameters which conversation allows to vary" (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson 1974: 731), a relatively greater degree of control by one speaker over others tends to exist. Of the two major ways of ordering turn-taking in institutionalized settings (Atkinson 1982: 102-103), that of "turn-mediation," in which one person designates who the next speaker will be, is common in classrooms. Mehan (1978) has further described the most common pattern of interactions in traditional classrooms as that of the IRE, in which the teacher initiates (I) a question, a student responds (R), and the teacher provides an evaluation (E) to the student's response in a "mediation" turn-taking management style.

In Mr. Max's class a great range of turn-taking styles was used during whole-class activities. One of the most common forms observed was that of student self-selection to respond to teacher questions, even during whole-class interactions. This style of turn-taking shifted the management of speaker selection from the teacher to the students, creating an informal conversational atmosphere despite the large number of people involved:

> T:.... What is a a lynx. (.). A lynx. Have you ever heard of a lynx?
> S1: /Yeah./
> S2: /Yeah./
> S3: Hot dog links.
> T: Hot dog links. [Student laughs]. OK. Well, it's not a hot dog lynx. [Students laugh]. But you're close.
> S4: It's an animal?

T: It's like a wild cat: A small wild cat...

Another style of turn-taking observed was the more common classroom form of student hand-raising and teacher mediation of turns. As Mr. Max explained:

> You'll hear me say every once in awhile, "OK, raise your hand," because too many people are talking at once. I just try to orchestrate it rather than dominate it. I say, "OK, one at a time." I just want to make sure everybody has a chance to say what they want to say.

Mr. Max also seemed to strive for widespread participation, keeping a few students from dominating the interactions by calling out for "new blood" if the same students repeatedly volunteered to provide responses.

In the present classroom then, contexts which allowed more time and energy for learning and less for getting organized to learn were created. Also because of the shared understanding of ways of interacting, the teacher did not need or choose to exercise much of his power in determining who spoke when, except to make arrangements in which all students had an opportunity to participate in discussions.

Speech Styles

I look now very narrowly at two linguistic style features which can give an indication of the speaker's stance toward the hearer. As previously mentioned, the teacher's status in relation to the students is inherently high. When a teacher makes a request to a student, his/her authority usually ensures that the request will be understood as a directive and complied with unless there is good reason not to. Using Brown and Levinson's (1987) notion of positive and negative politeness to examine the styles of Mr. Max's requests used in asking students to read their essays, it can be seen that his forms spanned the entire range of bald-on-record, solidarity-creating positive politeness, and distancing negative politeness forms.

The distribution of the requests across these forms, however, showed a distinct preference for a solidary informal style. Of eighteen such requests made during the reading of essays, two (11%) were bald-on-record with first names used ("First one to read will be Tang."), twelve (67%) were positive politeness forms, and four (22%) were negative politeness forms. Of the positive politeness requests, one used an in-group identity marker (FN [first name] + man), and the rest ranged from slangy questions ("Why don't you give it a shot" [3]) to more indirectly polite forms ("How about," "How would you like," "You want to," "Are you ready?" [9]). The four negative politeness requests were made using a form showing deference, T [title] + LN [last name] ("OK, Ms. Yin.").

Bald on-record 2 (11%)

Positive politeness	12 (67%)
Negative politeness	4 (22%)

The request styles used by Mr. Max can be thought of as another way in which general relations of solidarity and respect with his students are both created and expressed.

The use of various terms of address is another way in which interlocutors' stances toward one another are revealed and created. Brown and Gilman's (1960) landmark study has shown that V pronouns (as in "vous" vs "tu") are used by subordinates to express nonreciprocal vertical distance as well as mutual horizontal distance between interlocutors. T pronouns, on the other hand, are used by superiors to express nonreciprocal vertical distance and also mutual horizontal solidarity. Brown and Ford (1964) also noted that the use of titles and/or last names vs first names parallels that of V vs T pronouns.

In the classroom in the present study[2], the students used T + LN (title + last name) to address the teacher at all times. Mr. Max, on the other hand, used various terms of address with the students:

FN (first name):	69 (76%)
FN + in-group identity marker:	2 (2%)
FN + LN (first name + last name):	3 (3%)
T (title):	1 (1%)
T + LN (title + last name):	16 (18%)

In all, 2% are decidedly solidary terms, 76% are either solidary and/or vertically distancing in a downward direction to the students, and 22% are almost certainly used to "raise" the students up to the status of the teacher, since the teacher-student relation is inherently hierarchical. Although the use of T (title) or T + LN (title + last name) to address the students can alternatively be seen as a form of distancing if the students are accustomed to receiving FN (first name), in the contexts in which they were uttered in the present study, this does not appear to be the case.

Here again, it seems that an effort is being made on the part of the teacher to bridge the distance between himself and the students. One could argue that even if Mr. Max and his students were on a first name basis with each other, there would still be a power differential, which would be true. Certainly the teacher-student power relation does not magically disappear with the use of more equalizing forms of address or request, or through the use of humor and slang, which also characterized the classroom interactions. Nevertheless, it would seem that any reduction in either vertical or horizontal distancing could at least help to express and further create contexts of greater identification with one another.

---

[2] The data for this analysis are drawn from four Reading and Language Arts periods.

Topic Control

One series of activities that I observed was based on a central theme of survival. In the first activity, a reading of Jack London's White Fang, during which the theme of survival arose, Mr. Max controlled the interactions in a traditional, rather formal manner, exercising a fair amount of control. Standing in front of the room, he read to the students chapter by chapter, so that the entire class experienced the book together, pausing where Mr. Max chose to pause, and hearing more when he chose to read on. In having this complete control over the activity, Mr. Max was able to ensure that the children were understanding what he wished them to understand. Periodic question-answer sequences occurred, for instance, when Mr. Max came across a word that he thought the students might not know. For the most part, however, the majority of the questions that he directed to the students were designed to get them thinking about relations, causes and effects.

Mr. Max also repeatedly encouraged the students to conceptualize, to anticipate events to come, but in the following passage, it was he himself who ultimately provided "the" answer, linking his question back to the theme. Mr. Max also used the authority of the text, which "contained," according to positivist thought, the answer to the questions he asked, thereby further bolstering his own authority as teacher. In this reading activity then, there is a legitimation by the teacher of textual knowledge, knowledge that springs from the heart of the "American cultural literacy" canon, and a mutually supportive relation between textual authority and the status authority of the teacher.

T:"The Law of Meat." Let's check and see. What do you think it's going to be about.
S1: Meat.
S2: Eating meat.
T: Eating meat? Think he's going to the Sizzler and eating a steak? [Kids laugh]. I don't think so. Pat.
P: Eat or be eaten.
T: That might be. Eat or be eaten.
S3: Killing meat.
→ T: Killing meat. You think it has anything to do with survival?
Ss: Yeah.
→ T: We'll see. [Resumes reading.]

The second and major part of the reading activity took place after two chapters of the book had been read/listened to. This new activity marked a shift to Whole Language and Project Read methods of conceptualizing and categorizing, and at the same time, also marked a shift toward the children as the knowledge power base. For this activity, the children were asked to write on pieces of tagboard, any ideas that they had about the story. They then taped their responses on the board and, as a group, proceeded to put them in categories around the central theme identified by the students

as "Survival." The categories that the students created were "Fighting," "Eat or Be Eaten," "Story Plot," and a twelve-year-old Foucaultian "Knowledge is Power."[3] The students also made the important discovery themselves that the categories that they create can sometimes be fuzzy and overlapping.

T:..."Learning how to hunt and kill for food." Is that "Fight-" or "Fighting" or "Power is Knowledge."
→ S2: /Both./
S3: /Fighting./
→ S4: Both.
→ S5: It's both.
T: Could it be both?
S6: Learning can be fighting too.
S7: Yeah.
T: Let's put it in between them.

The students then characterized the story characters according to these same features. And expanding on one response, Mr. Max also related the events to his own life and to the lives of the students'. In the process he directly addressed the issue of cultural transmission, making the students aware of how learning and behavior modeling often takes place, though he unfortunately did so with a rather sexist stereotype provided by students.

T: How did he know how to fight.
S1: He learned from his mom and dad.
→ T: He learned from his mom and dad. He watched. He watched. He watched how to do things and then he tried. I think if you you can look at your mother and father as examples. Girls when you watch your mother getting dressed to go out somewhere special, what does she do that your father doesn't do.
S2: Make-up.
S3: Put on make-up.
→ T: Puts on make-up. [Kids laugh.] Yeah. Whereas my father, that I remember, didn't put on make-up. They prepare themselves. Did you learn from them?

The grounding of classroom activities in the students' own lives was further developed in essays that the children wrote on the theme of their own "Survival in the Seventh Grade." The knowledge legitimized in this activity was not that of textbooks or teachers, but knowledge from the children's own experiential world, their hopes, fears, and concerns about their lives in the following year, knowledge that the children alone had ownership of, and knowledge that in the openness of the classroom atmosphere, they

---

[3] This was first introduced by one of the students as "Power is Knowledge," but subsequently verbally changed by all to "Knowledge is Power."

were not afraid to voice. Mr. Max explained his role in the writing process in the following way:

> I'm not trying to change anything in their story because that's their story. I can't retell it....I think it's important that they see that I'm not creating this story for them. I can create the idea and let them go off on it. And that's what I do. We had a discussion yesterday about what makes writing fun for you. And they said, "It's got to be interesting. It's got to be fun. And it's got to be something that I want to write about." And I think that's for everybody; not just kids. That's for everybody....I want their ideas to be their own so that they can say, "Yeah, that's really my idea. Mr. Max didn't give it to me. He told us a little bit about it but that's my idea."

The teacher's role in the process was confirmed by students in interviews. Several students said that until this year they had hated to write because the topics had been so boring, but that now they enjoyed writing very much because Mr. Max let them write about topics that they liked. In fact, nearly half of the students in the class reported that their view of writing had changed this year for the better because writing had become more interesting and/or because they had a better teacher.

Before the students' class readings of their essays, Mr. Max asked them to listen for similarities and possible solutions for their own problems, and to realize that though their experiences would be similar, they would be seen through different eyes, with different knowledges and interpretations. He thus legitimized the students' various ways of knowing and promoted them to the role of potential teachers of each other.

In the example below, taken from a discussion that occurred between readings, the topic of getting help next year is raised by the students. In one of the very few instances of teacher control over experiential knowledge during this exercise, however, Mr. Max does seem to reinterpret the way that the children feel about getting help from teachers in junior high school. When the topic of grades is raised by a student as a common concern, Mr. Max also uses his power to step in and interpret the symbolic capital of various grades, tying this in, with the help of another student, to economic capital and the socio-economic realities of the world in their future lives. Thus although on the one hand, Mr. Max's interpretation of the students' knowledge in the second instance can be seen as an exercise of his power, on the other hand, he is making the students critically aware of the interconvertibility of various forms of capital, and linking it to school practice.

T: OK. Can anybody tell me in the three essays that we just heard, is there anything that's similar about them. Sitha.
S: Nobody's going to help them.
→ T: [?] Nobody's going to help them. Is that the way you guys

really feel, that nobody's going to help you in junior high school?
Ss: A little. Yeah.
→ T: Most of you do? You think that some of the teachers will help you?
Ss: Yeah.
T: Anything else you hear about that's similar.
S3: Getting good grades.
T: Getting good grades. That's a concern of everybody. Why is that a concern do you think. What are you worried about. Suppose you get a C [?]. Is that OK?
S4: If you don't get good grades you're not going to pass.
T: If you get an F you don't pass. If you get a C you can pass. Is that all you want to do is just pass? Mario.
M: If you don't get good grades it's hard to find a job.
→ T: It's hard to find a job if you don't get good grades. They look at your report card, and say you went to Finley High School. What kind of grades did you get there. And you know, "Oh I got D's and F's." And they've got another guy sitting over there who's got A's and B's. Who do you think they're going to pick=
Ss: =A's=
T: =because of the grades.

The issues of concern for the students that were raised in their essays---grades, self-esteem, school supplies, gangs, shooting, fighting, showers, and clothes---paint a poignant picture of the social spaces in which they live. They are worried about having enough pencils for school, forgetting their locker combinations, and finding their way to the bathroom. They are also worried about getting beaten up and killed. These are children who, in their everyday lives, play jump-rope or basketball on the playground in the afternoon, and then serve as interpreters for family, friends, and neighbors in their dealings with hospitals, housing managers, and at school.

In this classroom, these students were made critically aware not only of some of the ways in which their worlds have been constructed, but of ways in which they themselves are creating the world through practice. With help from Mr. Max, many seemed to have learned to use analytic tools, at least in some contexts, which enabled them to step out of the given social constructs that are continuously acquiring them, thus beginning, with human agency, to shape their own lives. By refusing to accept given categories, and by striving instead for non-oppositional solidary relations through practice, the teacher and students in the present study seem to have created contexts for each other in which there is perhaps a small but important movement in the direction of transformation.

References Cited

Apple, Michael. (1990). Ideology and Curriculum. New York : Routledge.

Atkinson, J. Maxwell. (1982). Understanding formality: the categorization and production of 'formal' interaction. The British Journal of Sociology 33:1: 86-117.

Bakhtin, M.M. (1981). The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin. Edited by Michael Holquist; translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin : University of Texas Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. (1977). Outline of a Theory of Practice. Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

---. (1991). Language and Symbolic Power. Cambridge : Polity Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre & Passeron, Jean-Claude. (1977). Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture. Translated by Richard Nice; foreword by Tom Bottomore. Beverly Hills, CA : Sage.

---. (1979). The Inheritors: French Students and Their Relation to Culture. Translated by Richard Nice. Chicago : The University of Chicago Press.

Brown, Penelope & Levinson, Stephen C. (1987). Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

Brown, Roger & Ford, Marguerite (1964). Address in American English. In Dell H. Hymes, ed., Language in Culture and Society, 234-44. New York : Harper & Row.

Brown, Roger & Gilman, Albert. (1960). The pronouns of power and solidarity. In Thomas A. Sebeok, ed., Style in Language, 253-76. Cambridge : The MIT Press.

Caplan, Nathan, Choy, Marcella H., & Whitmore, John K. (1991). Children of the Boat People: A Study of Educational Success. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press.

Cheung, Oona M. & Solomon, Lisa W. (1991). Summary of State Practices Concerning the Assessment of and the Data Collection about Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students. Washington, D.C. : Council of Chief State School Officers, State Education Assessment Center, Resource Center on Education Equity.

Diaz, Stephen, Moll, Luis C., & Mehan, Hugh. (1986). Sociocultural resources in instruction: a context-specific approach. In Bilingual Education Office, California State Department of Education, ed., Beyond Language: Social and Cultural Factors in Schooling Language Minority Students, 187-230. Los Angeles : Evaluation, Dissemination and Assessment Center.

Eckert, Penelope. (1989). Jocks and Burnouts: Social Categories and Identity in the High School. New York : Teachers College Press.

Edelsky, Carole. (1991). With Literacy and Justice For All: Rethinking the Social in Language and Education. London : The Falmer Press.

Edelsky, Carole, Altwerger, Bess, & Flores, Barbara. (1991). Whole Language: What's the Difference? Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann.

Freire, P. (1970). Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York : Continuum.

Giroux, Henry A. (1981). Ideology Culture & the Process of Schooling. Philadelphia : Temple University Press.

---. (1983). Theories of reproduction and resistance in the new sociology of education: a critical analysis. Harvard Educational Review 53:3: 257-293.

---. (1992). Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the Politics of Education. New York : Routledge.

Goffman, Erving. (1961). Encounters. New York : Bobbs-Merrill.

Habermas, Jurgen. (1986). Hannah Arendt's communication concept of power. In Steven Lukes, ed., Power. Oxford : Blackwell.

Hart, C.W.M. (1987 [1955]). Contrasts between prepubertal and postpubertal education. In George Dearborn Spindler, ed., Education and Cultural Process: Anthropological Approaches, 2nd ed., 359-377. Prospect Heights, Ill. : Waveland Press.

Kirst, M.W. & Yee, Gary. (January 1994). An Examination of the Evolution of California State Educational Reform, 1982-1992. In Diane Massell & Susan Fuhrman, Ten Years of State Education Reform, 1983-1993: Overview with Four Case Studies. New Brunswick, NJ : Rutgers University, Center for Policy Research in Education.

Knapp, Michael S., Shields, Patrick M., & Turnbull, Brenda J. (1992). Academic Challenge for the Children of Poverty.

Prepared for the U.S. Department of Education by SRI International, Menlo Park, CA and Policy Studies Associates, Washington, D.C. Contract No. LC88054001.

Krashen, Stephen D. (1981). Bilingual education and second language acquisition theory. In California State Department of Education, ed., Schooling and Language Minority Students: A Theoretical Framework, pp. 51-79. Los Angeles : Evaluation, Dissemination and Assessment Center, California State University at Los Angeles.

Labov, William. (1982). Competing value systems in the inner-city schools. In Perry Gilmore & Allan A. Glatthorn, eds., Children In and Out of School: Ethnography and Education, 148-172. Washington, D.C. : Center for Applied Linguistics.

McDermott, R.P. (1977). Social relations as contexts for learning in school. Harvard Educational Review 47:2: 198-213.

McDermott, R.P., Gospodinoff, Kenneth, & Aron, Jeffrey. (1981). Criteria for an ethnographically adequate description of concerted activities and their contexts. In Ronald W. Casson, ed., Language, Culture, and Cognition: Anthropological Perspectives, 377-399. New York : Macmillan.

Mehan, Hugh. (1978). Structuring school structure. Harvard Educational Review 48:1: 32-64.

Minicucci, Catherine & Olsen, Laurie. (1992). Meeting the Challenge of Language Diversity: An Evaluation of Programs for Pupils with Limited Proficiency in English, Vol. 5, An Exploratory Study of Secondary LEP Programs. Berkeley : BW Associates. R-119/5.

Nicassio, Perry M. (1983). Psychosocial correlates of alienation. Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology 14:3: 337-351.

Ogbu, John U. & Matute-Bianchi, Maria Eugenia. (1986). Understanding sociocultural factors: knowledge, identity, and school adjustment. In Bilingual Education Office, California State Department of Education, ed., Beyond Language: Social and Cultural Factors in Schooling Language Minority Students, 73-142. Los Angeles : Evaluation, Dissemination and Assessment Center.

Rubin, John. (1981). Meeting the educational needs of Indo-chinese refugee children. Las Alamitos, CA : National Center for Bilingual Research. (ERIC No. ED 212 699).

Rumbaut, Ruben G. & Ima, Kenji. (1988). The adaptation of Southeast Asian refugee youth: a comparative study. (Final Report to the Office of Refugee Resettlement). San Diego :

San Diego State University, Department of Sociology. (ERIC No. ED 299 372).

Sacks, Harvey, Schegloff, Emanuel, & Jefferson, Gail. (1974). A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation. Language 50: 696-735.

Strand, Paul J. & Jones Jr., Woodrow. (1985). Indochinese Refugees in America: Problems of Adaptation and Assimilation. Durham, N. Carolina : Duke University Press.

Strang, E. William & Carlson, Elaine. (1991). Providing Chapter I Services to Limited English Proficient Students: Final Report. U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service. Contract No. LC89089001, Task No. LC900120.

Wehrly, Bea. (1990). Indochinese refugees in schools in the United States of America---challenges and opportunities for counsellors. International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling 13: 155-167.

Willis, P. (1977). Learning to Labour. Westmead, Farnborough, Hants., Eng. : Saxon House.

Wodak, Ruth. (1989). The irrationality of power. Communication Yearbook 12: 76-94.